

# MONDAY MEMO

from WILLIAM B. MOSELEY, senior VP, Norman, Craig & Kummel

## Time to push past the advertising lag and enter the space age

The momentum of the world we live in—this space age where pictures of Mars come back to us via the 7 o'clock news—is accelerating almost beyond belief.

This continued acceleration makes our lives faster and more complex. And swift change always creates stress.

This is particularly true of the current evolution in the techniques and methods of successful communicating, specifically as they relate to the business of television advertising. And today too much of our television advertising is just out of phase and out of date with the pace of life as it's being lived.

Match the millions of advertising impressions that bombard the consumer today to the amount of time this consumer has to properly absorb these impressions. Someone called this "the world of too much advertising."

**But How Good?** ■ A world of too much ineffective advertising is probably more like it.

Today, Madison Avenue has its own malady—an "advertising lag"—whereby the action and emotional energy of the television commercial are non-directed forces, if anything aimed at where people were, rather than where they are, and thereby failing to motivate sales.

Could part of this be due to a popular misconception among various segments of our population that the majority of people dislike advertising? Well, the only legitimate survey of consumer judgment of advertising ever done—by the American Association of Advertising Agencies—shows this is not true.

But what it did reveal, is that people "pay attention to relatively few ads." Isn't that our problem, really?

Paying attention to ads is important; "liking" them is irrelevant.

**The Answer Game** ■ Furthermore, if you ask a person whether he likes or dislikes an ad, his conscious answer is not necessarily going to be an honest one. He may feel that his evaluation of the ad must display intellect and sophistication.

(The 4A's study showed advertising ranked in third place. It came behind the federal government and clothing and fashions as "things in life that we enjoy complaining about, but we may not really be too serious about our complaints.")

Take a group of Mack Sennett devotees and ask them whether they prefer Sennett or William Shakespeare.

swers would be? Sennett would come in a poor second, I'd wager.

The American Commercial Festival satire film on the 1964 season would have you believe it's necessary to make commercials people tell you they like. They didn't like the funny guy on the white horse (biggest sales introduction since Tide); they didn't like that cock-eyed tornado (knocked Mr. Clean out of first place nationally in seven months); they didn't like those crazy women flying out of the kitchen (first time a cleanser reversed a trend and added substantial additional annual sales). They thought the flying man was "all right," "kind of cute" . . . (Hertz controls well over half the rent-a-car business).

But I hope you noticed that although they criticized these ads, they talked about nothing else. I hope you also noticed the Nielsen share of market and volume figures on what they go out and buy.

**What vs. How** ■ The key is, actually, the difference between what people think as against how they really feel. Reach people emotionally with your advertising and provide them with the reason to buy.

Emphatic, wish fulfillment visuals are hard to conceive, difficult for some clients to understand. It took us eight years at Norman, Craig & Kummel to perfect this approach. And it took guts to run advertising on a new way of analyzing and using research. Particularly in the face of conscious reaction to measured success.

But this type of commercial moves with the tempo of contemporary life. The entire pace, force and rhythm of this advertising seek out their target and slam home each impression with massive effectiveness. These commercials are designed to be remembered. (A Trendex survey, by the way, recently showed that Ajax is the best remembered detergent brand name in the entire country.)

Women can't resist the forces of a White Knight that fulfills their deepest desires and basic needs. The symbol represents the product's promise of speed and power, and fulfills her basic wish (brought out by extensive research) to escape the horrors of dealing with dirt.

But this whole approach need not depend on a specific symbol. The approach can be with an empathy slogan or empathy visual that is in phase with the airborne momentum of today's living. Chanel, Ajax window cleaner ("See 100 Miles"), or Ajax scouring pads ("Declares War on Pots and Pans") are further variations and continued proof of this methodology at work. (There are many imitators on the air today, I might add, who illustrate how not to put this approach to work.)

If you seriously want to beat the "advertising lag" and if you want to communicate effectively, then you must find a way to build in the lifting emotional momentum into your commercial message so that it can "fly through the air" through the heart and to the head of your consumer.

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